Panel IV - Providing Intelligence to Policymakers

Lloyd Salvetti: Ladies and gentlemen, welcome anew. The leadoff panel this morning will focus on the general topic of providing intelligence to policymakers at the senior policy level. In addition, we will have the opportunity to acquire a unique perspective on the operations of a critical, but not highly publicized, component of the US national security system, the National Security Council's Deputies Committee. To a great extent, the relationship between intelligence and policymakers historically examines the written record, as historians must. In that context, we hope we have contributed to a better understanding of the written record of intelligence analysis and estimates at the end of the Cold War in the volume we produced for this Conference. Less examined is the role of intelligence in the dynamic of policy discussions and debate at the senior level. So today, we will explore how a principal policymaking body in the Bush Administration, the NSC Deputies Committee, was provided intelligence and how they used that intelligence in the policy process.

The core Deputies Committee consists of the Deputy National Security Advisor as the Chair, with counterparts from the State and Defense Departments, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and CIA, with other departments and agencies participating depending on the topics on the agenda. We are privileged today to have reassembled for this panel five of the individuals who were key members of President Bush's Deputies Committee.

Robert M. Gates served as Deputy National Security Advisor in the Bush Administration from January '89 until he became Director of Central Intelligence in '91.

Mr. Gates held a number of senior positions in CIA during his career, and spent nine years as a member of the National Security Council staff, serving four Presidents. As you know, he's interim Dean of the George Bush School and serves as an advisor and board member for several US corporations. As I go through this list, by the way, please..... Well, the reason I'm doing that is that there is a thread that connects all of these folks to their role on the Deputies Committee, and that is their service in a variety of different policy posts previously.

Admiral David E. Jeremiah, US Navy (Ret.), was Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from March 1990 to February '94, serving in both the Bush and early Clinton Administrations. He commanded the Pacific Fleet from 1987 to 1990, and other naval units during this career. He now is head of Technology Strategies and Alliances, Inc.

Richard Kerr was Deputy Director of Central Intelligence from 1989 to 1992, serving also a stint as Acting Director. A career intelligence officer, Mr. Kerr held several senior posts in CIA, to include that of Deputy Director for Intelligence, the head of CIA's analysis directorate. He is now a private consultant.

Robert M. Kimmitt served as Undersecretary for Political Affairs in the Department of State from 1989 to 1991, when he became Ambassador to Germany. Mr. Kimmitt held a variety of senior positions on the National Security Council staff and the Treasury Department before becoming Undersecretary of State. He is now a private international trade attorney.

Paul Wolfowitz was Undersecretary of Defense for Policy from 1989 to 1993. Dr. Wolfowitz served in a number of senior State Department and Defense Department

positions prior to his appointment as Undersecretary of Defense. He is now Dean of the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University.

I would also mention that we have another member of the Deputies Committee who served on an earlier panel, Arnold Kantor, who was Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs from 1991 to 1993, who is here in the audience. We will begin our session by asking Bob Gates to address how President Bush, General Brent Scowcroft, and Bob [Gates], organized the Deputies Committee, and how the DC process worked. We will then turn to Dick Kerr to address the role played by intelligence in the DC process, noting as well the various mechanisms used to transmit intelligence to all of President Bush's National Security team, to include the President himself. And then we will turn to Admiral Jeremiah, as was the general sequence in the Deputies Committee, to go from Bob setting the agenda, Dick Kerr addressing intelligence, and Admiral Jeremiah addressing the operational context. Following that, we will have Dr. Wolfowitz and Mr. Kimmitt addressing issues such as the strength and shortcomings of the Deputies Committee process, what were its best moments, and, perhaps, what were its worst moments, and how each of them received and used intelligence in the Deputies Committee process, and in interaction with their respective principals. Bob.

Mr. Gates: Well, the story of the Deputies Committee really begins, as so often, it seems to me, with Brent Scowcroft talking me into doing something I really didn't want to do. [laughter] I was the Deputy at CIA under Bill Webster, and I really was, really enjoyed working for Bill, I consider him a great leader and a great patriot, and he was a great guy to work with. Unfortunately for me, so was Brent, and so it was a real dilemma. I also

wasn't very enthusiastic about going back to the NSC. I had been there under Nixon, Ford and Carter, I had successfully evaded the NSC during the Reagan Administration--it was not a career-enhancing place to be during that period. Brent made a number of extravagant promises, and I would say that he kept them all.

So when we sat down to figure out how we would organize the interagency process to manage national security policy, I think we started bearing in mind two negative models. I'm not so sure how consciously we did it, but, certainly, subconsciously. The first was, the first model we wanted to avoid.....first of all, I should start with the fact that President Bush clearly wanted a collegial policymaking process. So the first model to avoid was the model that existed under President Nixon and Henry Kissinger, where, essentially, not only the decision making process was highly centralized in the White House, but so was the deliberative process, and a good deal of the interagency process during the Nixon Administration, with all due respect to those who were on the NSC at that time and others, was a little bit like Joan Rivers' line of, sort of, "talk amongst yourselves" while we make the serious policy decisions here in the White House. It was highly centralized, and the bureaucracy was cut out of a lot.

The other model we wanted to avoid was the more common model, and that was where everyone just jabbered interminably, debated without decisions, wasted a lot of time, and spun its wheels a lot. And we wanted a process that actually would make things happen.

So that sort of set the tone and the stage for what we decided to do. And the first place we began was with the people—with the membership of the Committee. The interagency process before had often taken place at kind of the tertiary level of

government. As DDI, Deputy Director for Intelligence, I had represented CIA in these interagency forums in the Reagan Administration, and so on. And often the Executive Assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs would represent the JCS, and so on. So Brent and I decided at the beginning that we would actually pitch this at the Deputies level, and so, for a change, the Deputy DCI became the representative from the Intelligence Community. Thanks to Goldwater and Nichols, we then had a.....we were able to have a Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs represent the Chairman and the JCS. We ran into a problem with....of reality, actually, in dealing with Defense and State, though. In the case of Defense, more often than not, the Deputy Secretary of Defense is more preoccupied with managing the Department than he is with focusing on substance and policy issues, and so Dick Cheney very much wanted Paul Wolfowitz to do this for him. And our key, our objective—we tried to keep in mind our objective—which was to have people at the table who could commit their agencies and commit their principal right there at the table. We didn't have to have everybody going back and going through a big process inside their agency. We wanted somebody that had a direct channel to the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the DCI and the Chairman, somebody who could deliver decisions quickly, and had a lot of easy access. So Cheney picked Paul as his representative to do this, and Secretary Baker did not want Larry Eagleburger tied up doing these meetings, and so he designated Bob Kimmitt. And Bob had the same kind of access to Jim Baker that Paul had to Cheney, and the full confidence of the Secretary. So this achieved our objective. And when other agencies were brought in, they were always at the Deputy level.

It seems to me, in terms of process, one of the most important things that we wanted to think about in terms of getting this group of busy people together was that if we didn't have effective meetings, if we didn't come to conclusions, if they didn't walk away feeling like, at least most of the time, "That was a worthwhile period of time spent," that they wouldn't come. They'd send a lower level representative. They were too busy to just screw around having debates about ethereal subjects, so they had to feel like something was really being accomplished. My own predilection was to never have a meeting that ran over an hour. Again, very busy people. We violated it occasionally, most of the time on arms control and tech transfer, but that's another subject—speaking of high points and low points.

What we also wanted was a situation where we could walk out of that meeting.....at the end of the meeting, I would summarize what had been discussed. If there were differences among the agencies, I would repeat those so that everybody knew where we were coming from, and what the situation was going to be, and how their position would be represented to the President. Either we all recommended that such an action be taken, or, one or another department took a dissenting view. And, generally, what the rule of thumb was, after our meetings would conclude, these fellows had two to three hours to get to their principal, confirm that the decision had been.....confirm what we had recommended, that that was okay with the principal, and then Brent or I would report to the President, and tell him this was the recommendation of his senior-most advisors. And it was a very, most of the time, a very efficient process.

I think that part of what made it efficient, in the spirit of true confessions, was that there was something of a steering group, a secret steering group, for the Deputies

Committee. And it was comprised of the President of the United States, and Brent, and me. And every day, when Brent and I would meet with the President, either I would confirm with Brent.....I would tell him, "We have a Deputies meeting. Here's the agenda, here's where I think we ought to come out. Is that where you think we ought to come out?" And at that point we would then go into the meeting, or I would go into the meeting. Sometimes when the issues were really important, in the morning meeting that we had every day with the President, I would go through some of this with the President, and the President would say, "Yeah, that's pretty much where I want to come out," or whatever. But the point is, we rarely went into one of these meetings without some idea of what we wanted to come out on the other end. They were very rarely open ended. And the key was, where are the other departments of the government? The President wanted to know where his principal advisors were on each issue. And he wanted their positions represented fairly. Brent had a very strong reputation for doing this, and the trust of all the principals, and we tried to do the same thing in the Deputies Committee.

The other thing that I think helped us with the principals was that we never forgot our role or our place. We were not a decisionmaking body. Our job was basically to identify issues, strip away all of the bureaucratic baloney surrounding them, get down to the really, the hard crystal issues. If there were differences between the agencies, strip away all of the foofaraw and get down to what's the really key issue that the President has to decide, and where do the principals stand on that key issue. So we got a lot of bureaucratic ash and trash out of the way during these debates, and were able to make sure that the principals then could focus on what were really the critical items that the President had to decide. It saved the principals, I think, over time, a lot of time. And

because of the way we conducted our business, we actually, over time, got a lot more confidence from the principals. And we reached the point where I think unique, in my government experience, we would have principals like Dick Cheney and Jim Baker saying, "Oh, just let the Deputies take care of that." And it was a degree of confidence that I think we had to earn.

I think that one of the things that helped us a lot was that we got a reputation very quickly within the government for getting things done and for it being a very efficient decision-making process. In fact, it got so....the reputation developed in such a way that one of the challenges that Brent and I faced was that a growing number of domestic agencies were trying to figure out how to get their business on our agenda, because it was a way to get decisions quickly. Perhaps one of the low points was when, during the lead-up to DESERT STORM, the Post Office wanted to have a couple of issues dealt with by us. [laughter] We took care of their problem quickly. [laughter]

In addition to policy formulation, another role that the Deputies Committee acquired was that of day-to-day crisis manager for the National Security apparatus. And the way things developed in 1989, we were sort of in one crisis after another from then until the end of DESERT STORM, and I suppose people would say until the end of the Administration. But this was a result.....we got this responsibility after the first coup attempt in Panama in 1989, and the government sort of fumbled around, figuring out how to deal with that. And it was clear to the President, and to Brent, and to Jim Baker, and to Cheney that some clear area of responsibility, line of authority and responsibility for dealing with crises, had to be established. And, because the Deputies Committee was already up and running, and they had trusted associates of their own on it, they basically

gave that responsibility to the Deputies Committee. And the truth of the matter is, that through the liberation of Eastern Europe, and our action in Panama, the coup attempts in the Philippines, and collapse of the Soviet Union, and so on, we really got a lot of experience on these issues.

There was one offshoot of the Deputies Committee that was sort of an expanded Deputies Committee, and it was the European Security Strategy Group, Steering Group. This group was developed, frankly, because Jim Baker couldn't make up his mind who he wanted to represent the State Department. And, because there were a lot of big issues associated with the reunification of Germany, including the restructuring of NATO, giving NATO a new sense of direction and mission, and so on. And so, in addition to Bob, Baker wanted Dennis Ross, and Bob Zoellick, and Reg Bartholomew to attend. So, instead of calling this the Deputies Committee, which would then create the opportunity for everybody else to send four people to the meeting, we created the European Security Steering Group, and it was this group, plus those three. And that group really, I think, did an extraordinary job in a very short period of time, of coming up with alternatives and proposals for the President, both in arms control, or arms reductions in Europe, as well as issues associated with the reunification of Germany and changing the face of NATO that was really quite extraordinary.

I think that a very important part of this, and really the last major point I'll make, is that you cannot underestimate the importance of personal chemistry in all of this. All of us had worked together for a long time in various capacities, and we knew each other well enough that you either checked your ego at the door, or somebody else would check it for you. I remember one time on the European Security Steering Group, Reg

Bartholomew was at the table for the State Department that day, and all the rest of us were sitting there, and Reg was occasionally given to just sort of erupting and giving ....and venting with a big speech and sort of shouting at all of us and so on and so forth, and Reg finally got tired and quit. And I turned to him, and I said, "Reg, that kind of bullshit may work with the foreigners, but we know you too well." Everybody laughed, and we went on with our business.

But this personal chemistry was very important, and I would say it was important outside the Situation Room, because a trust developed among these other individuals that overcame a lot of problems between their agencies. The truth is that there are always people in the bureaucracy trying to cause fights. But, if you have people at the top of agencies that want no part of it, or who can speak frankly to one another, who trust each other, then you have a situation where those kinds of fires can be put out. And a lot of people have commented over the years on the comity of the Bush Administration and how people got along. It worked at the principals' level, but it also worked very much at this level. And a lot of problems between State, and Defense, and CIA, and the other policy agencies and so on, were taken care of because these guys could talk to each other in a way that a lot of their predecessors had been unable to. And this became very important in a situation like the Gulf War, where we were often meeting two or three times a day.

It was a unique experience. I think it was a unique moment, not just because of the structure that we created for the Deputies Committee, but because of the personal chemistry involved on the part of the individuals here. It certainly was different and far

better than any other process like it that I experienced in the six Presidents that I worked for, and, frankly, it was one of the most satisfying experiences of my career.

Mr. Salvetti: Thank you, Bob. Dick Kerr.

Mr. Kerr: Bob Gates may have been reluctant to go to the NSC, but I was kind of enthused about it, actually.

Mr. Gates: To see me go!

Mr. Kerr. Yes. Because, one, I got to get his job, and I also got to work with him on the NSC, so that wasn't a bad combination of things to happen. President Bush yesterday said how important he felt it was to have the intelligence officers present when he read the PDB so the issues could be discussed, there could be some exchange. The Committee formed by this group of people provided intelligence the same opportunity in another very important forum, one that Bob has just described--our ability to go in and provide an intelligence framework or base of knowledge, get the information from them, because they also had major intelligence sources, sometimes much more than we did. Sometimes Bob Kimmitt would have talked to somebody that was fundamentally key to the problem, or Bob Gates or Scowcroft, and actually brought information to us. As you know, we didn't have full access to everything. We had a piece of it. I also, by the way, and I wanted to make sure.....Lloyd said I represented CIA. In the role on the Deputies, I really

represented the Intelligence Community, and I spent a fair amount of time with NSA, and DIA, and the NRO, and everybody.....anybody else out there who I could tap.

One of the things that I found very interesting about this group.....apart from the description that Bob Gates gave of a group that would work together, I never felt, for instance, that I had been stabbed in the back by this group. And I had previously been involved, as Bob had, in the Reagan Administration, and I didn't have that feeling. Across that.....[laughter] I had been beaten up a few times. But I found it was a group that where a lot of problems were solved at the personal level. I got a problem on an embassy, we were having some ambassador who hates us, maybe we can work this out between Bob and I. And, it usually worked.

I spent a considerable amount of time, and I don't really know about the others on this, I spent a lot of time as Deputy Director preparing for Deputies meetings. The key was, at least in my perspective of it.....all of you have probably gotten talking points from staff. You get talking points.....first of all, the people that prepare the talking points have no idea how the meeting is organized, how it's run, and, really, no idea of, ultimately, what the subject or the emphasis on a subject is going to be, so the talking points.....you'd look at them and say, "That's very interesting. Now let...." My approach was to gather a group of people in, sit around and talk about the problem, write my own talking points, and when I got to the meeting and listened to Bob's introduction that had no relation to my talking points, either, and I'd rip them up. So you went through a very iterative kind of process, which meant you had to be fairly concise, you had to know enough about your subject to really have some insight into it. A few times I

went to things that my eyes just glazed over, I'll have to admit. Hopefully, the person I brought with me knew something.

But I relied, I think the key from my perspective as the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence was, I think I knew who the good people were within the Agency and how to use them. And if I had one strength, that was it. It wasn't my own smarts, it was that I knew who could do the .....who could provide the information that was kind of critical to some of the decision making process.

It was interesting. The Deputies meeting changed nearly every crisis, nearly every group of participants, and if you got a substitute member, the nature of the group changed. I remember, and I won't mention the name, but I was telling Dave this, and Dave recollected it as well. We were sitting there, and one....a very senior person came in as part of a particular problem and said, "I have 14 points I want to make." [laughter] I remember Dave and I looked at each other, "14 points?" We only do three, four, points at most. You know, we don't do 14 points. But he went through all 14 of them, from beginning to end.

One thing that's important to know is a lot of the heavy lifting on this was not done at the Deputies Committee. It was done by working groups that Bob set up through the NSC, but it was also done by major groups within each organization. So, we were....at least I looked at myself as a spokesman, not just a repeater of their information, but trying to make that information relevant to the discussion that was going on. And that meant you had to be fairly quick because the discussions sometimes went strange places.

Someone yesterday....and the one point....one other point I wanted to make is on policy. A couple of people mentioned this separation between policy and intelligence.

I'm a little skeptical about that. My view is that any policy question can be turned into an intelligence question with just a flip of the wrist. I mean, it is not hard to take a policy issue and turn it into an appropriate intelligence question. They were not....this group around the table....was not at all bashful about telling me about intelligence, or that they knew something that I didn't, or they had judgments. And, quite simply, if I could make that transformation, I was not at all bashful about talking to them about the intelligence implications of their policy. Subtle.

I think the process was a very good one. I think the idea of having people who had some control and command of their organizations, and as everybody knows, control, even if you're in charge of the organization, you're not certain, at times, that you're in command of it. It is hard to get many of these organizations—very large, very interesting groups—but at least we had the opportunity to go back to our organization and provide some direct tasking, whether it was collection, whether it was analysis. In some cases, you have to remember that CIA was also an action arm of the Government. I mean, it had covert action programs, it had things that were real, that it did that were problems and successes. So it worked on both sides.

In any case, in summary, I'd say if it was a success from my point of view, it was because of the quality of people and the sophistication of the people that I had behind me, and many of them are represented in this room. And it was a class act. The people were classy. It was a sophisticated group, and it had a marvelous sense of humor, which I think kind of carries you through most of it. That's it.

LS: Admiral Jeremiah.

Admiral Jeremiah: I came to the Deputies Committee from the Fleet, as Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet. I came with a Fleet perspective. I'd had various tours in Washington, not in policy but in other areas, predominantly financial. When I got to the Deputies Committee in March of 1990, it was an ongoing operation. My predecessor, Bob Herres had been the first Vice Chairman to participate in Deputies Committee matters. I was conditioned by my experience—naval officers, by the nature of our activities, particularly during the Cold War, are usually operating inside, not gunfire, but cannon-shot range of your opposition almost all the time, whether you're in an aircraft, on a ship, or in a submarine. You're in very close proximity to your opponent, and you pay a lot of attention to intelligence. Shoot, move, and communicate was the basis upon which practically all military organizations are predicated, and that means you pay attention to your weapons officer, your engineer, and your communications group. By the time I left command of a destroyer and went to command of a destroyer squadron, where you had more than one ship to concern yourself with and more than one subject to deal with, my three principals changed—my three principal assistants—changed from those three that I just named, to the public affairs officer, the lawyer, and the intelligence officer. [laughter] Each of them had the characteristic of being able to see trouble coming and have some idea of what to do about it if it got here. I found that terribly useful in my experiences in the intercept of the *Achille Lauro* hijackers, where we had magnificent support out of the then-Reagan White House, John Poindexter, in providing intelligence information to us on the location of the hijackers, and their time of arrival over the middle of the Mediterranean, and the operations off Libya where often we would be in the middle

of a dog fight with Libyan fighters—no weapons—but at the point where it was [fingers snapping] that quick between the time you were in a shooting war or not. And it was our ability to be on both sides of the conversation and listen to the ground controllers on the Libyan side that allowed us to know how to avoid escalating to a different and a higher level. When I was Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet, Mike McConnell was my intelligence officer and later was the J-2 on the Joint Staff, an intelligence officer in supporting me and General Powell in the Gulf War. We had absolute confidence in our ability to deal with the then-Soviet submarine force in the Pacific on minute's notice. We knew where everything was in real time with excellent national and operational intelligence.

So the point of this is that I came into the Deputies Committee with an expectation of seeing intelligence wrapped very tightly into the policy, and I will tell you frankly, that my experience when I got to the Joint Staff illuminated the fact that my counterparts in the other services do not treat intelligence in the same way that naval officers do. They tend to treat it as a set-aside over here before you go off to do something important. It was absolutely essential to the way you did naval operations. It was also, I discovered very quickly, essential in the Deputies Committee, but I discovered two other things, as well. One of them Dick alluded to, and that is the talking points, and you may have noticed—I noticed, at least—in the Deputies Committees that, quite often, they would be crafted at the table, as Bob's are, mine are, Paul's making additions to his. [laughter] Policy was sort of a fluid sort of thing. The other thing I discovered was, when I came to the Deputies Committee, suddenly I discovered that I had to learn English as a second language all over again, because we didn't talk in the English I grew up with.

We were now in NATO-speak, which was some combination of arms control language, "chapeau" was a very loosely thrown-around word, and "intervention" was used about every time one could think about it. There was a whole host of this sort of stuff that flew around that I had to think about and try to figure out what we were really talking about, because English had suddenly no longer become my native tongue. [laughter]

One of the things that we discovered, the confidence among us led to our willingness to be much more open between agencies than would otherwise be the case. We, I think, shared things that other Administrations before, and certainly after, would not share with other agencies. In the Gulf War, we were paranoid about security, particularly before we took decisive action and began to move forces. One of the more embarrassing stories, of course, is that State, being a notorious leaker of all kinds of information and intelligence to the rest of the world, we beat up on Bob Kimmitt unmercifully most of the time before the Gulf War, because we just knew it was going to go bust, and then we had this absolutely breathtaking Deputies Committee meeting in which Bob raised, as a point of order, as we had begun the operations to lift forces into the Gulf, he wondered about why it was that the military Transportation Command had sent a letter addressed to every known shipping point of departure in Europe and the Middle East in an unclassified message, announcing the arrival of an enormous aluminum overcast of aircraft flowing to the Middle East. And, of course, it was an unclassified message, and we didn't see it. Bob saw it. Terrible thing.

A couple of things that came out of the Committee, I thought were good, interesting teaching points. The question of field intelligence and how you integrate it into the national intelligence structure was a difficult one for us in the Gulf War. We had

running gun battles between the commander, Schwarzkopf, particularly after the war, in complaining about some of the support he got. He was not, in many cases, aware of how much support he actually had, and the degree to which his support was coming from national sources. But it is the flow of information from a field of battle that is the most difficult part to get into the problem, and get it into the assessment so that national analysts can come to conclusions about the bomb damage assessment that are coincident with those reached by the commander in the field. The commander in the field is looking at gun camera footage, laser designations, a whole host of things that you've seen on television, but that data is not readily—was not—readily transformed into data that went to Dick and his people to help the policymakers understand how far along we were in the game. Unfortunately, I think that that has continued into Kosovo. We continue to see that same sort of problem where the commander in the field has a different estimate of what is taking place on the field from national sources, because he has, in some ways, better visibility than the national sources. The improvement of the manipulation of intelligence information from the field, or into any kind of network so that it can move freely among the people who have to have it, is a terribly important lesson, and I think we learned it in the Gulf War, and we saw it again in Kosovo.

The other lesson I think I took away from the experience on the Deputies Committee, is that somehow we have to do a better job of contingency planning in the sense of being able to lay down a template, so you can go to the locker and pull out the checklist, and go through the laundry list of things that have to be done for the kind of problem that's going on. No problem is going to be exactly like the checklist, or exactly like one you've seen before, but it's close enough so you should be able to take care of

those things in a useful way. And there are things we know are going to happen in the world. There are going to be changes in leadership in countries like Cuba and Syria, for instance. What are we going to do about that? Do we have a policy on it? How do we think about those kinds of problems? Where is the intelligence on the people who are likely to replace them, and are there people that we would more or less favor in that whole dialogue? That is not done well in the processes we have today, and I frankly don't know how to get to solve the problem, because the people who should play in it are the busiest people in Washington, in any Administration, under almost any organization.

And, finally, I think I'd like to just comment on the care and feeding of Allies, which dominated a host of our activities, to the point that we had to send hostages to Israel in order to be sure that our Allies stayed on the wagon and stayed in the coalition, and continued to play. The care and feeding of Allies was a constant effort that the Deputies Committee was worrying about throughout.

One of the things I forgot to mention when I talked about English as a foreign language was the interesting.... When we did our little excursions into the field of commerce from time to time, we would go to COCOM, and Bob Gates would come in and announce that we were going to have a COCOM discussion on computers. This is a most interesting discussion because nobody knew what the hell we were talking about, and language changed from one time to the next. Once it was gigaflops, then it was megaflops, and then it was some other thing that nobody'd ever heard about before. We were forever trying to catch up with technology and figure out how to control it, and finally made probably the most judicious decision and said, "This stuff is going to run away from us faster than we can ever design policy to control it." I had the enviable task

of always coming in and representing an absolutely dinosaur position with respect to the transfer of technology, because some arcane old CRAY computer somewhere was always described as the absolute key to the survival of the Free World. [laughter] And I had to explain why that was necessary to keep under close control, and we had to send guards with the computers and keep them there for the rest of their lives. [laughter] Wonderful thing. This was probably one of the finest experiences I have ever had in government. Those of you who aspire to operate in the public environment as a public servant in state, local, federal government, if you ever have the opportunity to serve in a situation like this and have the same kinds of people to serve with, you will be very fortunate, indeed. Thank you.

LS: Bob Kimmitt.

Mr. Kimmitt: Thank you, Lloyd. I guess I'll start with a bit of a defense of the Reagan Administration, since I spent four and a half years on the NSC Staff. It's pretty hard to argue with the results of the Reagan Administration. I think it was the steadfastness of policy approached both by the President and Vice President that produced that, but I think it is fair to say, as Bob and Dick intimated, that sometimes those results were produced in spite of the process, rather than because of the process. We were blessed in the Bush Administration with that same clarity of leadership and vision at the Presidential level, but we knew that we could do better at the procedural level. And, not surprisingly, I think all of us will conclude that we did.

The Deputies Committee, of course, is part of the National Security Council system. The NSC itself, created in 1947, is a statutory body, but the President can craft his system any way that he wishes. And that's primarily structuring the staff and structuring the committees of the NSC. Fundamentally, where you have to start, particularly for the students in the audience is, what is national security? You can probably write paragraphs, but for me, it's fairly algebraic, and that is, it's the summation of foreign policy, plus defense policy, plus international economic policy, resting on a strong intelligence and information base. Really, that's what you see in front of you, and that is the bureaucratic manifestation of an effective bringing together of those various strands of national security policy formulation. I'll come back to that intelligence information distinction in a moment.

I agree one hundred percent with the point that all of my colleagues made on personalities. It wasn't really just at our level that the personalities worked. As Bob suggested, and Dick did, it worked at the level above us. In George Bush, Brent Scowcroft, Jim Baker, Dick Cheney, you had people who had been working closely together since the Ford Administration, and it was very clear to us that we were not just to produce good work, but to produce it in as collegial a fashion as possible. I remember a colleague of mine at the State Department came in to one of our small morning meetings just beaming and said to Secretary Baker, "We beat Defense on issue X." And I remember Jim's face just didn't move, and this guy was a little bit surprised. And Baker said, "Well, I hope it was the right result, because we're not in this to beat Defense. Dick Cheney's got one of the toughest jobs in government, and we're all trying to produce the best result that we can for the President and the country." That message got out very

quickly throughout the State Department early on. That is, we weren't out there to best anybody, we were to produce the best result. There's a big difference between the two.

I would say the only time that we had to sort of restructure our interpersonal relationships started with the Philippines insurrection in the fall of 1989, because it was really the first time that we had really conducted our business on the secure video conference system, which has now become very much part of the government process, but, at that time, was really quite new. So, rather than coming into the Situation Room of the White House, we'd walk into, in my case, the State Operations Center, Bob would go to the Situation Room at the White House, others would go to their respective agencies. We'd be sitting in front of a camera with screens in front of us, and you could tell from those first few meetings, people were really concerned about how they looked on TV. [laughter] They were supposed to be looking at the camera, but they were checking that monitor over there, checking a little bit of this, and all the rest of it. [laughter] I'll come back to the security video conference, too.

Fundamentally, our job had three parts: policy formulation; crisis management; and implementation, both of policy and of crisis decision making. My own view is that intelligence plays a very important role in policy formulation. That's very often early in an Administration, where you have at most about a six-month window to put in place an effective policy foundation before events start to run away from you. I agree with Dave that you have to try to find some way to keep thinking of contingencies, keep thinking of new initiatives. On the crisis side, I'd say information is very often as important as intelligence. What I brought in to Dick Kerr very often, what others brought, were really bits of information. He would then go back and help craft that, through analysis and

otherwise, into useful intelligence. But, you know, in this information revolution era, one of the great challenges, of course, that intelligence has, is keeping up with information. And the tension between those two we felt every day. We didn't have time for three-page, ten-page analyses going into these meetings. As Dave said, we were very often just not only making policy, but getting information on the fly. And how the Community deals with that tension between information and intelligence, I know, is one of the things that's very much on George Tenet's mind. But I would say one thing that is very important.....well, let me make one other point first on crisis management. There was a great fight early in the Reagan Administration as to who the crisis manager was going to be. It was a fight between Vice President George Bush and then-Secretary of State Al Haig. And Haig, of course, had had quite a bit of experience in the bureaucratic battles of the Nixon and Ford years. He felt it was very important that he lead the body that did crisis management. Others felt, no, it needed to be done from the White House. There are various ways to do this, but what I would say is, stick with the person who brought you to the party. And that is, you need to have your crisis managers also be the people who are doing your policy formulation and implementation on an ongoing basis. Crises do not produce better bureaucratic responses. If you have problems forming policy because the personalities aren't right, or the structure isn't right, it will only be exacerbated, not helped, by a crisis situation. And I think the fact that this group spent so much time in the early months of the Bush Administration forming policy together, by the time the crises really started to hit, really I guess beginning with Tiananmen Square and moving on, we had already begun to operate well as a group, and you have to, I think, be able to go back and forth between the two.

But one key thing that I think we did right, and again, I think part of this was learning....

Side B

Mr. Kimmitt: (Continued).....earlier problems was, whether it was policy formulation or crisis management, the implementation of decisions reached is extremely important, and, I'd say, one of the toughest parts of the process. Because you really work hard to move things up to the National Security Council or the Presidential level for decision. Very often, once you get that decision, you sort of breathe a sigh of relief, the bureaucratic battles are over, let's move on to the next one. No. That's really only half the process. To get it implemented in a way that gets instructions out to the field, whether it be to commanders, ambassadors, and so forth, is very, very important to do. During the Gulf Crisis, we used to meet at the State Department at 8:00 every morning, a big meeting in my office. We would then move into a meeting of the Assistant Secretary level group—I think the Policy Coordination Committee, it was called—then we'd have a secure video conference, Deputies Committee, meeting. We'd then go into a Small Group meeting, just a very small group of us at the White House. Bob would then participate in the meetings in the Oval Office, would come back to us with what decisions had been made. And then we really walked back down that process, from the Deputies Committee to the Assistant Secretary level back to the individual departments. We did that on a cyclical basis. I think too often people work very hard on the upslide, but it's the downslide that, I think, requires some careful management from groups at this level and elsewhere. I

would, just, as a vignette, say one of the reasons we set up the Small Group was, security was a great concern, and it was really just, I guess, the five of us plus Richard Haass, would meet to discuss some of the most sensitive parts. You might say, well, why didn't you just do it on the secure video conference? Well, if you're ever done secure video conferencing, you know that the camera has a small range. You sort of see four or five people sitting at the table at the principal, but I had this vision, particularly at the Joint Chiefs, that there were bleachers off at the sides. [laughter] You know, and that legions of action officers were just sitting there scribbling everything down. So the only way that you would know that you were dealing with a relatively small group was by doing it on a face-to-face basis. But, I think we have to recognize that that was a technological advance. There are going to be more technological advances. How do you harness technology, whether it be information or other means to make the policy process work better?

I think I would close just by saying, if you're looking at something that I think we could have done better. In a way, the better we got, the more we sucked the air out of the Assistant Secretary level process. Many of us have worked at the Assistant Secretary level before. Paul Wolfowitz was a terrific Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs in the Reagan Administration, and, to be honest, he drove policy process along with Gaston Sigur, Rich Armitage, and others, for Asia. And that's really, I think, where the policy process should be driven. Policy decisions may have to be made at a higher level, but you really want that Assistant Secretary level to be the engine, move it through a group like the Deputies Committee to decide what needs to go forward. But I think one of the problems that we had, and I don't know whether this was personalities, I

don't know whether it was just the tenor of the times, was that people developed so much confidence in us that, frankly, too much came before us. And as Bob said, we'd spend a lot of time separating the wheat from the chaff and, really, making some decisions at our level or making some judgment calls that should have been made at a lower level. So, as you look to structuring things in the future, I hope that there'll be something like the Deputies Committee that operates as that bridge between the ultimate policymakers, but, also what I hope will be, the engine of government, and that is people working at the Assistant Secretary level and below—the interagency group process, where the real expertise is. And, again, don't set up the Deputies Committee to try to be all things to all people. Instead, make it a balanced part of an overall process. Thank you.

LS: Paul.

Mr. Wolfowitz: I think we're reproducing history in another respect, as I recall that seating around the table used to be Bob Kimmitt at Bob's left, and I would be at Bob's right, and we'd go around the table from left to right. So, by the time we got to me, an enormous number of intelligent things had been said, and what was I left to say, but I would find something. I'll find something now. I'm not going to do, though—Lloyd may be complaining. I mean, he asked us to talk about the worst moments, so I guess that's left for me, but I'm not going to do it, either. We've referred to the sessions of Euro-babble, and some of the sessions on tech transfer, but I don't think we had any bad moments. I concur in the judgment here that we were wonderful. [laughter] I really mean that, very sincerely, but I also think--I say it jestingly--because two points have to

be made, one of which has already been made, but it has to be underlined. Part of the reason we were so good is because our bosses were so good. And not only good in the sense that they had the same degree of collegial ability to disagree. It's not just collegiality--you can be collegial by never bringing up a difficult issue--but a collegial ability to disagree, but also just incredible high quality—Colin Powell, Brent Scowcroft, Jim Baker, Dick Cheney—it was really remarkable. So that's one thing.

But the second thing, and I think I'm the first to say this, and it's interesting that the absolutely crucial thing, and I know everyone here would agree with me, was who the President of the United States was, and his ability to make decisions. It was important in two respects: number one, he loved this stuff. He was willing, and we'd hear it from Bob, in fact, on a daily basis. He'd make the decisions even before we got the recommendations up to him. He didn't have to be persuaded that these things were important.

But there's something else, which is [that] some of these decisions were incredibly difficult, risky, daring decisions. And I think when the history of the Gulf War is written, or when it is being written, everyone marvels at this incredible coalition that President Bush assembled, and everyone realizes that it was a historic achievement. But I'm not sure too many people fully appreciate the ingredients that went into making that historic achievement. Yes, it helped a lot that the President had been around the block so many times, and knew so many of these people in personal ways, had incredible experience, that was enormously valuable. It helped a lot that he had this incredible telephone diplomacy--another technological innovation that, I guess, started at the end of the last century, but wasn't really exploited in an international crisis, I think, until the

Gulf War--to be able to pick up the phone and talk to King Fahd, or to Mikhail Gorbachev. But I think the most important thing was that every time there was a hard decision to make, whether it was a decision to start threatening to use force against tankers, Iraqi tankers, at the very beginning of the crisis, or, for that matter, the more delicate decision of do we hold off using force for three days? Margaret Thatcher was going ballistic because she thought if we held off, we wouldn't be able to do it when the time came. The President both made the decision to give the UN an extra 24 hours or 48 hours, but also the decision when it had to be made—I mean, the decision to pretend that he didn't care about hostages. One cannot imagine this man who writes personal notes to everybody, thank-you notes, not thinking what it meant to have 500 Americans and other foreigners in the hands of this demon. And, yet, by pretending he didn't care about it, I think we produced one of the great results of that war which is, there were no hostages. Saddam Hussein released them. He was convinced they were of no value.

And then, of course, the obvious, really tough, decisions about the decision to double the force, the decision to go to war. But, in a way, I think the most crucial decision of all was that decision in the first few days, communicated to King Fahd, that, if we come, we will finish the job. That was what was absolutely crucial to lining up Allies. It's not schmoozing on the telephone, it's convincing them that when you come, you will finish the job, and making the kinds of decisions that made that possible. And I don't think any of the accounts I've read of that history quite adequately give credit to President Bush for a series of, by my count, between ten and twenty of these tough decisions, including the decision to go to the Congress, which was a very, very high risk decision, and we almost lost it. My boss was against it, because he said we might lose it. But, on

every single one of them, the President was right. It certainly made our life incredibly different, because we weren't discussing the issues of two weeks ago. We were discussing what comes now, because the President yesterday decided on the thing we recommended, or were involved in recommending the day before. There's no question, I think everyone here would agree, that that was crucial to our functioning so well.

I do think, as Bob Kimmitt mentioned, technology was very important. Having those video conferences meant that when things got really hot, particularly with the Gulf War, we could meet more than once a day without the enormous time investment that was involved in assembling a group like this for a face-to-face meeting, although the face-to-face meetings were indispensable.

I've asked myself, given that the President was so wonderful, and given that our immediate bosses were so wonderful, and given, as has been said already, the people supporting us were so wonderful, did we add any value at all? I think we did in many ways. I'll just give one example. I think it bears on this question of contingency planning. I think one of the most successful exercises in contingency planning that I've seen in government was the one that the Deputies Committee put together under Bob's direction after the failed coup attempt in Panama on October 2nd, 1989. My recollection, at least mine, is that at the time, we all hoped that Major Giroldi would succeed in overthrowing Noriega, since Noriega was our nemesis. We didn't really quite know what we should do. We did know there were a lot of things we shouldn't do, and we took all kinds of flak from the press for not doing various things that we shouldn't have done. But after that coup failed, and Giroldi was dead, Bob assembled us and said, "We've got to think faster next time, and we've got to think through what some of the contingencies

might be next time." Through that process, we began to think about what might be some of the things that would happen in Panama. And I think the result of that was that we identified things that we would never have....we hadn't identified clearly in the heat of crisis. I'm not sure we would have identified the second time around in the heat of crisis. It's relatively simple when you say it, but the fact that it made a huge difference to us, not only to get rid of Noriega, but to think about who replaced him, who would replace him. As a result, when we finally did act in Panama, it wasn't to install a new Noriega as a new coup leader in Panama, but to actually try to get Panama back to a democratic government.

It sounds very simple when you say it. It wasn't simple at all at the time, and it really took a lot of thinking through different contingencies, and it never happened exactly the way we conceived of it. But the fact is that by thinking of the things that could happen, you begin to think of the right issues. I think that is where contingency planning works at its best. But, in order to work well, it can't be done by some group of contingency planners who sit off in a building somewhere out in the suburbs of Washington and write contingency plans and put them on the shelf, and then you bring them in when the crisis happens. The only good contingency planning is that which is done by the people that are actually going to have to handle the crisis when it comes, because it is an exercise in how to think about a problem. It is not a recipe for dealing with a problem.

In thinking about how the intelligence played in the Deputies Committee, to me, the most important thing is how much we just simply took for granted. We took for granted in almost every situation that we had a pretty accurate picture, not necessarily

down to the finest resolution, but we had a broad view of what was going on. And, particularly with respect to the Gulf War, we just took for granted that every day in that period leading up to the war, we would have exact dispositions of Iraqi units, we would have all kinds of precise intelligence on Iraq. And imagine, thinking for a moment that you were sitting at the Deputies Committee in Baghdad—of course, it's a committee of one—and you were totally blind. You have no idea what's going on. We just took for granted that we weren't blind. We might not always see things with great precision, but I think that sense that we knew broadly where the major pieces were, and on so many problems, is something that's invaluable, and probably only appreciated if you're really thrown in the dark as many of our adversaries, fortunately, are. In fact, I think one of the big successes of the Gulf War—I don't know whether it's a success of intelligence, or success of operational commanders, or a success of Hosni Mubarak, who said publicly that no Egyptian forces would ever enter Iraqi territory--but a combination of things somehow convinced Saddam Hussein that we would go right where he wanted us to go, which was across the heavily-mined coast of Kuwait and across the Kuwaiti border. He was totally stunned, I still don't understand why, but totally stunned, that we went around to the west. And I think it's not only because he was blind, and not only because he may have been in some sense stupid, but I think it was also because of active deception measures which were undertaken, some of which I know about, some of which I'm not sure I do.

There are some things I don't remember clearly from the Deputies Committee. Bob may remember, because he had to deal with it if it happened. But I honestly don't remember any major leaks. I think it's extraordinary to think of how many issues this

group dealt with, and how many times we've been on other interagency groups where leaks would be an every-other-week occurrence. And we were dealing, as has been said, with some of the most sensitive matters. If there were any leaks, they weren't big enough to remember from this eight-year perspective.

I also don't remember any sharp distinction between intelligence and policy. And, while Dick Kerr may have been trying to go to great lengths to have an intelligent excuse for uttering an opinion about policy, I don't think any of the rest of us ever cared if he uttered an opinion about policy. It was part of the process. There was no sharp distinction, and I think one of the reasons the intelligence that we got was so good was because Dick knew exactly what the policy issues were that we had to answer the next day. So that he went back and got answers to the questions we needed, not answers to the questions that somebody sitting in an intelligence cocoon might think were the questions.

And I don't remember any big disappointments of coming to the table and thinking, "Why didn't the intelligence people tell us that last week? Why are we just learning it now?" In fact, my two most vivid memories of intelligence in the process both involve Dick, and both, I think, are proud cases of getting it right. One was not at the Deputies Committee, but at the NSC, when, it must have been mid-1989, or the Fall of '89, when the policy toward the Persian Gulf was first discussed. And I remember our chief intelligence officer, the President of the United States, saying, "Well, yes, I hear that you're recommending that we should see if we can get Iraq to change its policy, but we know Saddam Hussein." And I think the words literally were, "Can the leopard change his spots?" And I think Dick Kerr was Acting Director that day and gave a rather lengthy description of the leopard and why his spots were unlikely to change. It didn't mean that

it wasn't worth trying to do so, but it meant that we were doing it with our eyes wide open.

The other one I remember, and Bob Gates wasn't there—he was backpacking, I think, in the Northwest--and I know....this was when the Iraqi crisis had first broken. In fact, I said to Bob Kimmitt, "Bob, I know the Deputies Committee has to be run by the Deputy National Security Advisor, but he's backpacking. We've got to do something." And, finally, I think, reluctantly, Kimmitt summoned a meeting at the State Department, which wasn't called a Deputies Committee, but, basically was a Deputies Committee. And I remember that it was Friday, I think, and I think it was July 27th, six days before the invasion. And Dick Kerr said, "The Iraqi buildup has gone beyond anything that can be attributed to merely bluffing. They are ready to undertake some military action." I remember that very clearly. I also remember we said, "Well, if that's the case, maybe we should send a sharper warning," and remember being told, "Hosni Mubarak has just sent a message to the President of the United States saying, 'You Americans are making too many warnings, not too few. If you would just shut up and leave us alone, we Arabs could settle this among us.'" It underscores that what was missing there wasn't reasonably good intelligence about what Saddam was up to, but a fundamental debate about how do you respond to that. And the debate not principally within our own government, but between our government and our allies in the region. And, while I was one of those at the time who was arguing for more muscular demonstrations of American will, I certainly think, in hindsight, it was terrific that Hosni Mubarak was the man responsible, and that when the crisis hit, we couldn't be blamed for having provoked it.

I also remember we did a little bit of "back of the envelope" contingency planning at the time, and quickly concluded that the most difficult contingency to deal with would be if Saddam just sliced off the northern part of Kuwait with the disputed oilfields. It would be very hard legally to respond, and we began to talk about how we'd deal with this most difficult case. I don't think anyone dreamed that he would be as stupid as to invade and seize the whole country, which, in certain ways, simplified our responses a great deal. But I think it's a good case for illustrating the close interplay between trying to predict what's going to happen and having to predict how you will respond to what may happen.

I do think we saw weakness at the very end of the war, and it's been alluded to. I think, for whatever reasons, and I think it may be a tendency in Washington and, therefore, in the Intelligence Community, to rely too much on technical intelligence. But we had a serious disagreement on the eve of the ground war between Washington and the commander as to the weakness of the Iraqi Army. And it is clear, with 20/20 hindsight, that the commander in the field was right. And the weakness of the Iraqi Army was not measured principally in how many tanks had been destroyed, but how the morale of that organization had totally collapsed. And morale is a very, very difficult thing to measure, and it certainly can't be measured by strict technical means of intelligence. In that case, the commander's view prevailed, so there was no failure of intelligence, but there was a fundamental disagreement on a very important point.

And then I would say, if I'm thinking about the future and where one needs to try to do things better, I suppose one could say that nobody gave us very good intelligence about what would happen in the immediate days after Saddam's defeat in Kuwait. On the

other hand, if we had gone as a Deputies Committee a week before the war ended and said to the Intelligence Community, "Tell us what's likely to happen in Iraq if Saddam's army is whipped in four days with 150 American casualties, and it is one of the biggest military fiascos in history?" They would have said, you know, "What have you guys been smoking?" No one predicted what the result would be, remotely closely, I think, and therefore it understandably took a few days, more than a few days, to get a good handle on what was going on there. I suppose it does say that the ends of wars are events that you have to expect some big discontinuities, and that ought to enter into your thinking about intelligence.

The other thing that I think we learned or should have learned or need to think about is that, in the Gulf War, while for the most part, perhaps, we tended to overestimate Iraqi capabilities, there was one capability that we underestimated, and that was his ability to keep firing SCUD missiles, even in the face of our attacks against them. I think it's important to think about that for the future because that is a future problem. It is something that we're going to have to, unfortunately perhaps, deal with with other rogue nations. It is as close a connection between intelligence and operational military action as I could imagine.

I guess I would just conclude with two comments: Number one, Bob Kimmitt reminded me of something that is very important—there are decisions that shouldn't come up to a Deputies Committee level. When I was Assistant Secretary for East Asia, we had this thing called the EA Informal. We were able to get a lot of things done and, frankly, they were issues that probably, particularly given this was the height of the Cold War and most people figured the real action was with the Soviet Union, a lot of our

issues, even the initial response to the murder of Benigno Aquino in the Philippines, wouldn't have made the cut of a Presidential consideration. So it is important to try to reproduce something of this collegial, effective, interaction at a lower level.

But then, finally, I just want to say this was, without any question, my most exciting experience in government or probably in my life. I can't imagine anyone paying me enough to have so much fun, anywhere. Thank you.

LS: Thank you, Paul. Before we take questions from the audience, I'll ask Bob Gates, and maybe anyone else on the panel, who would like to make some additional remarks or reflect on what's been said.

Mr. Gates: I'll just say a couple of things very quickly. One of the things that Lloyd asked us to think about was high points and low points. And I think there really were very few low points. I don't think that the collegiality ever broke down, and I think that the point that several others have made about the tone being set at the top, was critically important. President Bush made it clear to his principals, and to us, that he didn't want the kind of backbiting that had been so characteristic of the government for so long. And I think one of the reasons there were so few leaks was because of the respect that the principals had for one another, and they didn't fight their battles in the press. They didn't choose to wage bureaucratic warfare through the newspapers or the electronic media. They did it in the conference rooms, and then once the President made the decision, everybody saluted and went forward.

I think one thing that, also, contributed to the positive environment at both the principals level and at our level was that we didn't wear it on our sleeve and we didn't think about it all the time. But we were very aware that on all of the issues we were dealing with, these were huge problems. These were things we knew historians would be dissecting for decades to come. The reunification of Germany, the reorientation of NATO, the liberation of Eastern Europe, the end of the Cold War, the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Gulf War, these were non-trivial issues. And we knew their importance, we knew their importance not only for our own country, but for the future of the world. And I think that it imparted a seriousness and a sense of responsibility on the part of all of the players, from the President on down, that really was felt very much. And I think, particularly when we were crafting some of the documents in the lead up to the War, in that specific instance when we were defining our war aims, for example, there was a lot of talk around the table that historians would be looking at these documents for a long time, or in a long time, to see what we had done, and why we had done it. And we were very mindful of that, and I think it contributed to the spirit of the whole operation.

The only other point I would make is that, in terms of issues not coming to the Deputies Committee, I agree with this entirely. If I had to identify low points, for me, it was just the issues that I detested the most when they would come to the Deputies Committee. It was arms control and technology transfer. Arms control, because it became so metaphysical, and we would get into these tiny disputes of language and so on. And we went beyond English as a second language and into a babble that I don't think anybody clearly understood. And it became very frustrating sometimes because people would be going back and forth at our level on issues that really should have been sorted

out at a lower level. And the other.....and the same thing with technology transfer. I mean, these are reasonably intelligent people, but none of us are in a position to sit there and make the decision whether a three-axis, four-micron milling machine is going to make the difference between war and peace. And they would bring these issues to us because they couldn't solve them at the lower level. And we'd sit there and look at each other and say, "We don't know the answer to this question. How the hell do they expect us to answer it?" So, we'd go ahead and make a decision, [laughter] because we knew if we didn't, it would come back to us. It was just to get it off the table. But this question of making sure that the lower levels, the assistant secretary levels of government, do their job properly and impose some discipline there, I think is a very important one.

Mr. Kimmit: Lloyd, I would just add—we've talked a lot about collegiality, but I want to make clear that people understand that our goal was not consensus. Our goal was what we thought was the best policy, the best decision, for the US Government. I think very often people think that you have to get consensus. Well, basically, consensus documents—you can always tell how many people wrote a consensus document, because there's basically one page per person. Right? And you end up, at the end of it, and say, "What the hell are they talking about?" The best decisions are ones where people have very sharp differences of opinion, but have a process in which it can be brought forward fairly to a decision maker like President Bush. Paul reminded me of this, because it wasn't just the question of whether to go to the Congress for a resolution approving the use of force in the Gulf, but, really, our entire UN strategy. I mean, Maggie Thatcher was the first one to say, "Stay away from the UN." Our feeling was that, if we could lay a

foundation in the UN, it would make it tougher for the people in Congress not to support us living up to our UN obligations, and ultimately it worked out. But many times in that process, decisions had to be taken forward by Bob Gates, because of very sharp differences between and among us. I mean, they were collegial differences, but, again, our goal was not to try to reach consensus. Consensus often produces mush. What you really want to do is to state your positions sharply, not for the sake of difference, but, rather, because you do feel strongly that that's in the best interest of the US.

I'm not going to let it go unsaid, but this will be my last comment. Ultimately, I think, this group, the people above us, and I think below us, turned out to be better than the sum of our individual contributions, and I think that's the real measure of effectiveness. But I'll tell you, you need leadership. Paul is absolutely right to emphasize the immensely important role President Bush played. Bob was exactly right to mention the very important role that our principals above us played. But, for whatever we individually may have done, I want to say that you could not have had a better chairman of the Deputies Committee than Bob Gates. Bob and I had been colleagues for 15 years before that, we had arm wrestled before bureaucratically, but the fundamental fact is, from the first meeting that we had, he came in prepared with a very clear idea of what it was we were trying to get out of that meeting. Didn't always produce consensus. Very often, things had to be taken forward, but I think, very quickly, we knew that Bob was going to take that forward fairly, through Brent, lay out our position at the principals level, and to the President effectively, and that he would get back to us with a decision that we could carry out. Therefore, when you look to put future processes together, I think this process worked well, but the personalities are important. The Chairman of the

Deputies Committee, or whatever it will be called in the future, I think is absolutely critical to making the whole process work. It's the switchplate between the senior-most levels of the rest of the bureaucracy, and Bob Gates couldn't have done a better job.

LS: We're really almost out of time, but we can take a question.

QUESTION: I'm Frank Smist, and I'm the authorized biographer of David Boren. And I guess if there's one criticism I would have of the conference is that there's been..... We're talking about intelligence at the end of the Cold War. And after the investigations of the mid-'70's, the Congress has become a real player in intelligence. So, I guess the question I would have from each of the principals here is, how much did what Congress was doing enter into your deliberations, and, especially, with your relations with both intelligence committees? What was the impact of that? Ambassador [sic] Jeremiah talked about care and feeding of allies. What about the care and feeding of the Congress?

Mr. Kerr: Care and feeding is kind of "raw meat?" [laughter] Is that what you.....? You know, from an intelligence perspective, it was an interesting dilemma, quite honestly. Because, quite often, I found myself, in my other role as DDCI, going down and essentially trying to provide an intelligence setting that allowed the Congress then to look at the policy and begin to shred it. My colleagues sometimes didn't appreciate those....nor did anybody appreciate those ventures into the.....They were fairly tough. But, we certainly had it in our mind, and I think the Deputies Committee—probably the gentlemen on my right here more than I did, because they were probably more sensitive to

the Congress and to the Hill than I was. But I spent a lot of my time trying to provide an accurate picture to the Congress without undermining US policy. One of the better examples I have, and it's just a hopeless thing to do....one of the best examples I have is the—it actually cleared before the Deputies began meeting—and that was the escorting of the tankers to Kuwait. The Intelligence Community wrote a very good set of documents that said, "The following things might happen: terrorism, attacks on US ships, attacks on the oil facilities, mining." General Powell, who was the Deputy at NSC at that point in time, said, "You know, you're not really being very helpful," because I was also carrying this message to the Hill. "You're not being very helpful to policy." I said, "Well, you know, sometimes intelligence is not all that helpful, but that's our judgment of what's going to happen." As it turned out, what the Administration did very effectively was prepare for all those contingencies, to actually handle mining, terrorism, attacks on oil fields, all rather well. So, Colin Powell and I have talked about this several times. He complains to me rather bitterly about intelligence, and what I have said in response is, "Just the way it should work. We alerted you to the dangers. You did something about it. And, on balance, it turned out pretty good." He's not convinced. [laughter]

QUESTION: I wanted to pick up on the point that Mr. Kimmitt made about using technology to improve the process, and I'm just curious about the notion of the video teleconference versus the face to face. Did you find an appreciable difference in the type of flow of discussion that you had? Was there a type of decision that you said, "Hey, we have to meet face to face to make that type of decision." Then, finally, thinking about

this dynamic for a group that doesn't know each other as well as you did, had this type of experience. Does this type of technology raise some costs in terms of the policy process?

Mr. Gates: Let me start with that one. I guess it essentially ended up being my call whether we would do a teleconference or do a face-to-face meeting. And I basically broke it down this way. Most of the time, we used the teleconferencing for crisis management. It was very important to make decisions very quickly; sometimes these meetings would be called on just a few minutes' notice. It was important during crises that each of these people was actually in his own department at the top of his own pipeline of information: Bob Kimmitt in the State Department Operations Center, where he could be on the phone to ambassadors in a given country, and Dick receiving information real time out at CIA from NSA and NPIC and places like that, Dave on the operational side, and Paul over in the Department of Defense. And so I would make that call, and so we mostly did it for crisis management. And my view was, for the reasons that Bob described, almost all of our policy deliberations we did in person. Because there could be a free flow, because we knew who was in the room, and we knew we could keep each other's confidence, we could have a free-flowing exchange of very candid views that nobody would do if they didn't know who was on the other end of the line. Because you never do know who else is sitting in the room in a video conference. So that was the general division of labor in terms of the use of the teleconferencing. And it was kind of fun at the very beginning, because there was a lot of tie-straightening, and so on and so forth—a little preening. Then, occasionally, somebody's monitor or somebody's set

would go out, and they'd have sound but no picture, and then it really got fun, because you never knew what was going on on the other end then.

In terms of a group that doesn't know each other very well, I think that the lesson from the Bush Administration to any President, and particularly a new President, in putting together at least the National Security team, is to devote real attention to the nature of that, to its composition as a team, and a premium on putting people who have known each other, and who have worked together at one time or another, together as part of that team. Because you hit the ground running as President, and you have to make decisions, and you have to get this process moving very quickly. And there's really not time for a bunch of strangers to get acquainted and to gain one another's confidence, particularly in those early months. And so my view is that you can't just pick individuals for senior positions, but you have to look at the package as a whole. Can this group of people work together? Because all of us here will tell you, it really does matter when the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense aren't speaking to one another. I saw that happen a lot. Or when nobody trusts the DCI, or when nobody trusts anybody else. It really does make a big difference. So I think this composition.....I think the idea of putting a bunch of strangers together to make national security policy is something to be avoided.

LS: Admiral Jeremiah.

Admiral Jeremiah: I want to amplify two parts of what Bob said. One, the most surreal and enjoyable event was when Bob would go off to Kennebunkport with the President,

and was only able to talk to us by voice in the conference. He never knew what we were talking....the notes that were going across the table, and the things that were going on at the table, but this ethereal voice would come down from God in Kennebunkport. Secondly, with respect to a transition to a new Administration, you can't waste those first six months, because that's when you have the most freedom of action. I can speak because I'm one who went through a transition from one Administration to the other. The second point that I took away from that transition was that the campaign is over the day after the election, and from that point on, you have to govern. Never mind the campaign. Put that behind you. From here on out, you're trying to govern the United States of America, and you've got a whole different agenda than you may have had as a campaigner.

LS I'm sorry, but we've run over, and we've got another panel. So, if you would like to speak individually to them, but.....join in thanking these folks for a terrific panel.

BG: 1/11/00